

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5418

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE YAOUNDE 0969

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, CM

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN OPENS

REF: YAOUNDE 653

1. PRESIDENT AHIDJO FORMALLY OPENED PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN MARCH 20 WITH BRIEF RADIO SPEECH TO NATION URGING MASSIVE VOTE IN APRIL 5 ELECTION AS DEMONSTRATION OF CAMEROON-
IAN'S SUPPORT FOR HIM, FOR CAMEROON NATIONAL UNION (UNC) PARTY,
AND FOR NATIONAL UNITY. CALM AND REASONED SPEECH KEYED ON
NATIONAL UNITY, SELF-RELIANT DEVELOPMENT FEATURING AGRICULTURE
AND AGRO-INDUSTRY, REGIONALLY BALANCED DEVELOPMENT, POLICY
OF PLANNED LIBERALISM WITH IMPORTANT ROLE OF PRIVATE INVEST-
MENT, AND NONALIGNMENT AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION
AS STEP TOWARD NEW WORLD ECONOMIC ORDER.

2. PUBLIC PREPARATIONS FOR ELECTION CAMPAIGN HAD BEGUN WITH
ANNOUNCEMENT AFTER INITIAL MEETING OF NEW UNC CENTRAL COMMITTEE
(VICTOR AYISSI MVODO, AHMADOU HAYATOU, AND MME. DELPHINE
TSANGA); PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES COMPRISING ALL MEMBERS OF
CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND GOVERNMENT MINISTERS FROM EACH PARTICULAR
PROVINCE; SECTION COMMITTEES HEADED BY UNC SECTION PRESIDENTS;
SUB-SECTION COMMITTEES, ETC. PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS DIRECTLY
ASSOCIATED WITH PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES AND RESPONSIBLE FOR
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PREPARING MINUTES OF MEETINGS AND FORWARDING TO UNC CENTRAL

COMMITTEE. PREFECTS, SUB-PREFECTS, CHIEFS OF DISTRICT TO
AST AS SECRETARY-TREASURER OF THEIR RESPECTIVE COMMITTEES.
THUS, NO BONES MADE ABOUT MAINTAINING DISTINCTION
BETWEEN PARTY AND ADMINISTRATION, THOUGH CONSTITUTIONALLY
OTHER PARTIES COULD RPT COULD EXIST AND COMPETING CANDIDATES
COULD HAVE BEEN NAMED.

3. PROVINCIAL COMMITTEES HAVE MET AND ARRANGED, IN ASSOCIATION
WITH LOWER-LEVEL LEADERS, SCHEDULE OR RALLIES THROUGHOUT
EACH PROVINCE. MEMBERS OF EACH RPROVINCIAL COMMITTEE WILL BE
ATTENDING AND ANIMATING THOSE RALLIES WHICH WILL CONTINUE
THROUGH APRIL 4. ALTHOUGH ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE THAT GOVERNMENTAL
SERVICES ARE TO FUNCTION NORMALLY THROUGHOUT ELECTORAL
CAMPAIGN, IT CLEAR THAT DECISIONMAKING AT LEAST WILL BE AT
STANDSTILL WITH ALL TOP LEADERS REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR
PATRIOTISM ON THE HUSTINGS.

4. MINISTER OF STATE FOR ARMED FORCES HAS COMMENTED TO AMBAS-
SADOR THAT PRESIDENT AHIDJO WILL NOT PLAY A VERY ACTIVE PUBLIC
ROLE IN CAMPAIGN. IN PREVIOUS CAMPAIGNS HE HAD MADE APPEAR-
ANCES IN EACH PROVINCIAL CAPITAL. WE MAY SEE HIM CONFINING
HIMSELF THIS TIME TO THE LEADOFF SPEECH AND AN ELECTION EVE
TALK. PERHAPS THIS IS PART OF STRATEGY OF REDUCING IMAGE,
NOT TO MENTION REALITY, OF ONE-MAN LEADERSHIP.
MOORE

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